

low, again rising to a perfect fury of rapid sounds,
not without a certain rhythm, but with rasping effect
upon the nerves of Europeans tossing sleeplessly in
the warm humid air.

After harvest comes the house-building ; and when
that is finished the men are free to go out to seek
work. They usually set out in companies, for the
Konde dislikes being alone on a journey. Like all
home-loving people, they are suspicious of strangers,
and if they have to pass through another tribe, they
take great care to guard their small possessions ;
seldom more than they are wearing, and a spear or a
club to guard them from the more obvious dangers of
the way. There will be a few youths going out for
the first time, with a wild flutter at the heart, of fear
and expectancy. Fear, for they have heard strange
tales of the white men and their ways ; expectancy,
because of the wonderful things they will see : the
great houses, steamers, trains, motors ; and what must
seem countless white men to those who have been
accustomed only to the missionary, the magistrate,
and the storekeeper, and even these perhaps some
days' journey from home. And who knows but he will
come back with money in his pocket, wearing gorgeous
raiment, a helmet perhaps, and, above all other things
to be desired, a pair of boots ! Those who stay long
come back with the spoils of civilisation ; highly
coloured cloths, cheap clocks, melodeons, mouth-
organs, worthless pocket-knives, which they deal out
to admiring friends and acquaintances.

4. A visit to the chief's father's grave was paid in company with the chief and some of his *amafumu*. It was situated in a banana grove (*ilisieto*¹¹) not very remote from the chief's hut. The grave of the present chief's father was on the ground-floor, about one hundred paces from its edge and was characterised by a small sixedged basalt block about half a metre in height¹² and about forty centimetres in breadth. An *indola*-plant was also standing on the grave about one metre from the basalt block. 765 [764]

On this occasion the chief also told me of the special cases for which sacrifices are offered in this grove. These are performed only in cases of very serious accidents, sickness or famine which may overcome the chieftainship. In such cases a black cow is slaughtered after sunset at the edge of the grove. In the presence of the chief some pieces of meat of the slaughtered beast, together with some bananas, are laid down at the grave. The chief adds a prayer to his ancestors at some distance from the grave, referring to the evil by which the chieftainship or some special village of it has been afflicted. He enumerates all the names of his ancestors and asks them for their help. 769 782

The remaining pieces of the meat and other bananas are left in the grove during the night. When the next day dawns, the *amafumu* return and some *qban-yago* divide the meat and eat it together. On this occasion the chief orders the removal of all remains of ashes from the huts. The ashes are thrown down in such unclean places as where leprous persons had been buried. After this has been done, the chief in conjunction with an *unnyago*¹³ produces a new fire for the huts by twirling, and all other fires of the village, or villages, must be kindled anew from this "need-fire". [766] [372]

5. The reason for visiting an *undagusi* (diviner)¹⁴ who dwelled in Ibungu an older age-set village¹⁵ which seemed to the visitor to be a more ancient part of Katumba, was caused by the sickness of the chief's sister. In accordance with the custom of the Nyakyusa in bringing women back to their father's village if they are very sick, the 787 [164] 484

¹¹ Cf. Johnston, *ilisieto*, pl. *amasieto*, p. 450; Mackenzie, *ilisieto*, burial place, p. 209; *masieto*, graves of the dead chiefs, p. 121; Wilson, Introduction, p. 287, *ilisieto*, sacred grove; Merensky, p. 115.

¹² Cf. Fülleborn, p. 327.

¹³ Cf. n. 5, p. 3.

¹⁴ Cf. Johnston, p. 451.

¹⁵ I proposed to call the special form of villages found within the Nyakyusa society, which are erected on the age-set principle, "age-set villages" (*African Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 15—16 June 1943), a terminology that does not alter G. Wilson's statements on the "Age Villages" (Introduction, p. 269 ff). [56] 621

787 sister of the chief had also been brought back to the village of her
[164] brother. I was of the opinion that she was afflicted by a serious
[484] tropical ulcer on the ankle of the left foot. The healing of these ulcers
commonly takes a very long time, and as this woman had already
much suffered, and as the medicine-men consulted seemed to be un-
able to restore her, she was brought to her brother's village, but there
also she had not yet recovered. The chief had, therefore, resolved to
ask the diviner, whose name was Mwaigwisyá, for the real cause of
her sickness.

After he and his *amafumu* had taken their seats on mats, the chief
explained to the diviner the reason of his visit. The diviner then
grasped a curved piece of wood about 20 cms. in length with his right
hand, after he had spat upon his hands. Then he moved the wood round
his head, and finally placed it with one of its ends on the even, cleansed
ground before his mat, and waited for the questions of the chief.
The single questions, as for instance: "Is the sickness caused by
Kyara?", or "Is the sickness caused by this or that person?", etc., were
put to the diviner by Lamek Mwainyekule, the son of a chief of
another chieftainship¹⁴, now belonging to the *amafumu* of Mwamasika,
as he now stayed in his village. Mwainyekule seemed to be not only



The Séance with
the diviner.

[776] the most intimate adviser of Mwamasika, but altogether the most
clever man I met among this people. After each of the questions
addressed to him the diviner murmured the names of the chief's

¹⁴ A village of this name is to be found on Dr. Kiepert's map (of 1895),
southern to the Kieyo.